

The latest news from the Barossa Improved Grazing Group

[View this email in your browser](#)



Natural Resources
Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges



Natural Resources
SA Murray-Darling Basin



The BIGG Bulletin

FEBRUARY 2016

Grazing in Barossa vineyards project completion

In 2015 BIGG conducted the project, '*Livestock grazing management in Barossa vineyards*'. It was funded by Natural Resources Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges and conducted in association with Barossa Grape & Wine Association (BGWA). The project consisted of a survey of BGWA grower members to determine the benefits and barriers to adoption of grazing in vineyards, and a focus group to verify the survey results.

The project determined that the key reasons BGWA growers graze livestock in their vineyards are: weed control, reduce chemical use/costs, reduce other input (machinery/fuel/labour) costs and to utilise feed. To successfully graze livestock in vineyards the key criteria were: conduct rotational grazing, manage the timing of grazing and ensure good fencing.

Of the growers that participated in the survey who are not intending to graze livestock in the vineyards their key reasons were: lack of/need to upgrade fencing, soil compaction and the need for sheep management. These factors were also identified as some of the common knowledge gaps.

The project also highlighted the differences in opinions that growers have about soil

compaction being caused by grazing in vineyards compared to machinery. In addition, there is scope for BGWA growers to agist sheep in their vineyards if they don't own them.

The [final project report](#) and a [factsheet](#) summarising the projects findings can be found on the BIGG website.

Native Grasses/ Soil & Fertiliser Pasture Walk

Prepare your hills and native pastures for 2016

The fire and the following two dry springs have knocked our native pastures around- come along to learn and chat about:

- How are the native pastures looking (assess Dry Matter, Feed Quality, Ground Cover)
- How can we aid their recovery in 2016?
- Look at last years soil results and how can we rectify problems?
- Check out the 2015 fertilizer sites- what can we learn from them?

Guest speakers include Steve Richmond- Soil Specialist and Daniel Schuppan, Livestock Production Specialist, both from Landmark, Jamestown.

The details:

- **Date:** Wednesday 9th March 2016
 - **Time:** 1pm-5pm
 - **Where:** Meeting at Sedan Hill site followed by a discussion at the Keyneton Hall with drinks and nibbles!!
 - RSVP & Map: Georgie: 0409 287 261 or georgie.keynes@biggroup.org.au
-

Future direction in property management

Ian and Fiona Koch travelled to the US in October 2015 to study leading edge sustainable agriculture practices, thanks to a BIGG supported AW Howard study award.

Spending time with US rancher and sustainable ag advocate Gabe Brown, the couple

learned about a range of techniques including polycultures, soil health management and livestock diversification.

The main points Ian and Fiona learned from Gabe Brown were:

- The benefits are significant from improving soil health to reduce dependence on artificial fertilisers in terms of soil structure, organic matter, water holding capacity and ultimately yields. This can be achieved by using diversification of plants, plant root systems and organic carbon and mineralisation.
- Using a mix of plants including legumes, brassicas and cereals supports achieving soil balance. Each plant has its own unique purpose to bring balance to the soil system and environment.
- Strip grazing using electric fencing is a successful method for reducing parasites
- Diversity of livestock reduces animal parasites and pests.
- Encourage beneficial insects and predators
- Continue learning from observation of nature, history and mentors

Read all about their learnings in Ian and Fiona's journal article:

<http://biggroup.org.au/resources/recent-articles/>

From the Inbox...

- The Angaston Ag Bureau Hogget Competition is being held on 31 March [click here for flyer](#) along with the Merino School Challenge [click here for flyer](#)
- The GRDC Technical Workshop Program is now in full swing. See flyers below for further information and registration details:
 - Identifying Cereal Root Diseases [click here for flyer](#)
 - Septoria: Fungicide Resistance & Management [click here for flyer](#)
 - Managing Canola for Grazing and Grain [click here for flyer](#)
 - Nitrogen Cycling and Trace Element Management [click here for flyer](#)
- Keen to learn about best practice strategies for grazing management of native pastures? This upcoming workshop on the 3rd of March near Auburn SA will include practical sessions on pasture assessment, grazing management, feed budgeting, animal nutrition as well as destocking triggers and management options prior to the break of the season. See www.agripartner.com.au/events for further information and to register to attend. [click here for flyer](#)
- 'Managing Soil acidity' workshop being run by Andrew Harding from Rural Solutions SA at Hallett on Thursday 3rd March commencing at 2.30pm. [click here for flyer](#)
- More information is available at <http://www.gwlap.org.au/event/field-day-peats->

[soils/](#)

- Wangary Fire Pasture Recovery [GRDC report](#) [MLA article](#)

Your BIGG Contacts

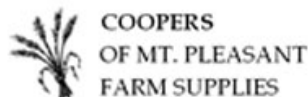
Technical Facilitators:

[Brett Nietschke](#): 0432 804 389

[Georgie Keynes](#): 0409 287 261

Communication Officer:

[Rebecca Barr](#): 0402 788 526



Government of South Australia
Department of Environment,
Water and Natural Resources

Copyright © 2016 Barossa Improved Grazing Group, All rights reserved.

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)



Follow BIGG on Facebook



Check our our Website

MailChimp